

If Barb Survived by fanculturesRORW

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Friendship, Supernatural

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2018-03-12 09:40:12

Updated: 2018-03-12 09:40:12

Packaged: 2019-12-16 22:45:58

Rating: K

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,047

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: An alternative ending to the episode where Barb's death is confirmed and a taste of how her survival would affect the other characters on the show.

If Barb Survived

Beep. Beep. Beep

The room feels hot. Her vision is hazy but the colours are warm. The smell is clinical and clean. Suddenly, a voice, "Barb? Oh my God Barb! She's awake! She's alive!"

Days in the Upside Down felt endless, she wasn't sure how long she'd been gone. It felt like forever – it felt like it never happened. Nancy looked so familiar; her small frame was perched at the end of the bed and her prominent jaw was wagging in excitement as she filled in the blanks. She never thought she'd see her best friend again. Slowly, the unease of it all started to creep up behind her neck; her best friend? Nancy Wheeler had forced her to drink at a party. Nancy Wheeler picked a boy over her. Nancy Wheeler went home that night – Barbara Holland didn't.

"How's Steve?" Her upper lip curled in disdain. Nancy could feel the disconnect between them; this was the closest they'd been to each other in weeks and, yet, it was the furthest apart they had been in their entire friendship. Unsure of whether to ignore the remark, Nancy shuffled in embarrassment. With her arms folded across her body, she started to pinch the skin around her elbow; her lips were pursed with shame as she tried to look around the room for the correct answer.

"Barb, things have been... strange since you left."

"Left?! You mean since I was dragged through a swimming pool by a carnivorous monster to a different dimension? Which, by the way, wouldn't have happened if you had just stuck by my side like you promised."

"Barb it wasn't like that. I could have never known that was going to happen. And Steve, he... we... we're not like that."

"Well, I'm glad I went through hell and back for such a promising romance."

"Barb, please – "

" – please leave."

Jonathan heard the door slowly shut. He'd never seen Nancy look so upset, her head was heavily drooping down towards her shoulders. They exchanged a glance, her eyes were fighting back tears. Maybe it would be better to leave it until the morning, he thought to himself; he had a bigger priority right now.

Beep. Beep. Beep

Only a few weeks before, the thought of Jonathan, the freak from high school, visiting Barb in the hospital would have seemed strange. Barb smiled to herself, how she could possibly think after all the past events that THIS was strange. Jonathan looked at the corners of her mouth crinkling upwards, he never noticed how soft the details on her face were. She looked happy to see him, or maybe she was just relieved that it wasn't Nancy coming back.

"I heard you played a big role in finding me. Nancy wouldn't stop talking about you."

"She wouldn't stop talking about you either. She was so worried about you, Barbara."

"If you're here to defend her, I'm not really in the mood. I just spent weeks playing runaway snack with your brother; I have every right to be salty. "

"Well, then you're lucky the Upside Down likes their snacks sweet. The little bald girl, she's obsessed with Eggos." He could see her lips become gradually tighter as she was trying to hide her smile. "Thank you, Barbara. I'm not sure my brother would have made it alone."

Her finger was wrapped in a plastic clip and her arms were wired up to a drip, yet she still managed to shuffle her hand closer to his.

"Friends call me Barb."

It was now pitch black in her hospital room; the doctors said she needed rest. Realistically, she probably could do with some sleep; she

hadn't slept since she arrived. However, the instant the lights went off, she immediately catapulted herself back into that strange, dark place. In fact, in the darkness of the hospital room, she could still feel the monster's presence behind her back. The wires around her arms started to turn into vines, wrapping tighter and tighter around her until she could no longer breathe. She stood up to go to the bathroom, she spent most of her nights there. The light made her feel safe, and the mirror gave her an extra set of eyes to see if anything was hiding in the shadows. She heard a noise from the men's bathroom like someone was choking or wrenching their guts.

Wary, at first, she peeked from behind the door and saw the small frame of a boy, once a stranger, hovering over the sink. "It's ok Will, let it all out." She rubbed his back with the affection of a mother; he was the only human contact she had the entire time that they were held captive from reality. This wasn't the first time she had caught Will throwing up during the night, they're mutual fear of the dark was one of many things that kept them close. However, this time it was different. He seemed to be suffocating; the veins on the side of his neck were prominent and dark. Finally, a thick, black, viscous puddle splattered onto the sink and down the drain. Barb wiped the side of Will's little mouth as he began to cry. She tried to keep calm as she violently scrubbed any sticky residue from the sink.

"Will? Listen to me. This stays between us, ok?"

"But mom told me to tell her everything from now on, to keep us safe."

"Not this. If we tell them you've brought back an infection from that dark place, they're going to test on us for the rest of our lives. We'll pretend this never happened, and tomorrow we can go back home to our normal lives. Promise?"

"Promise."

Hand in hand, the unlikely friends walked back towards their rooms. As the automatic light in the bathroom shut off, the sink started to bubble. A squidgy noise was coming from the drain as if something was twisting and multiplying by the minute. Then, in the silence, a distant screech cut through the pipes like ice. This promise may be a

dangerous one to keep.